

LXIV

Peliaco quondam prognatae vertice pinus
 dicuntur liquidas Neptuni nasse per undas
 Phasidos ad fluctus et fines Aeetaeos,
 cum lecti iuvenes, Argivae robora pubis,
 auratam optantes Colchis avertere pellem 5
 ausi sunt vada salsa cita decurrere puppi,
 caerula verrentes abiegnis aequora palmis.
 diva quibus retinens in summis urbibus arces,
 ipsa levi fecit volitantem flamine currum,
 pinea coniungens inflexae texta carinae. 10
 illa rudem cursu prima imbuit Amphitriten.
 quae simul ac rostro ventosum proscidit aequor,
 tortaque remigio spumis incanuit unda,
 emersere freti candenti e gurgite vultus
 aequoreae monstrum Nereides admirantes. 15
 illa, atque haud alia, viderunt luce marinas
 mortales oculi nudato corpore Nymphas
 nutricum tenus exstantes e gurgite cano.
 tum Thetidis Peleus incensus fertur amore,
 tum Thetis humanos non despexit hymenaeos, 20
 tum Thetidi pater ipse iugandum Pelea sensit.
 o nimis optato saeculorum tempore nati
 heroes, salvete, deum genus! o bona matrum
 progenies, salvete iterum, *salvete, bonarum!* 23b
 vos ego saepe meo vos carmine compellabo.
 teque adeo eximie taedis felicibus aucte, 25
 Thessaliae columnen Peleu, cui Iuppiter ipse,
 ipse suos divum genitor concessit amores,
 tene Thetis tenuit pulcherrima Nereine?
 tene suam Tethys concessit ducere neptem,
 Oceanusque, mari totum qui amplectitur orbem? 30

14 freti *Schrader*: feri *V* 16 atque haud *Bergk*: atque *V*: haud ante alia *Goold*
 23b om. *V*: ex scholiis huc revocavit *Orioli*. Lacunam implevit *Peerlkamp*.

64

Once upon a time, pine-trees grown on the peak of Mount Pelion
 swam, they say, through the liquid waves of Neptune
 to the streams of Phasis and the territory of Aeetes.
 This was when chosen young men, the strength of the Argive youth,
 wishing to take back from Colchis the golden fleece, 5
 had the nerve to run through the salt straits in a swift ship,
 sweeping the sky-blue plains with palms of fir-wood.
 The goddess who keeps hold of the citadels on the tops of cities,
 she herself made the chariot for them which flew before the light breeze,
 by joining together the pinewood web to a curving keel. 10
 That ship was the first to baptise the unskilled Amphitrite with sailing.
 As soon as she ploughed through the windy plain with her beak
 and the wave, curled with the rowing, spun white foam,
 then from the white torrent of the strait the watery
 Nereids lifted their faces in astonishment at the prodigy. 15
 On that day and no other, did mortals see
 with their eyes the sea-nymphs bare of body,
 standing out of the white torrent up to their breasts.
 Then Peleus is said to have been inflamed with love of Thetis,
 then Thetis did not despise a human wedding, 20
 then even the father himself realised that Peleus must be joined to Thetis.
 O heroes, born in an age of time all too desirable –
 hail, race of gods! O goodly offspring of good mothers, hail again!
 You will I often address with my song.
 You also, blessed beyond others in the good fortune of your wedding, 25
 Peleus, mainstay of Thessaly, to whom Jupiter himself,
 the father of the gods himself, resigned the object of his own love,
 was it you whom Thetis, the most beautiful of the daughters of Nereus, held?
 Was it you whom Tethys and Oceanus – who embraces
 the whole world with sea – granted to marry their own grand-daughter? 30

quae simul optatae finito tempore luces
 advenere, domum conventu tota frequentat
 Thessalia, oppletur laetanti regia coetu:
 dona ferunt prae se, declarant gaudia vultu.
 deseritur Cieros, linquunt Phthiotica Tempe, 35
 Crannonisque domos ac moenia Larisaea,
 Pharsalum coeunt, Pharsalia tecta frequentant.
 rura colit nemo, mollescunt colla iuvenis,
 non humilis curvis purgatur vinea rastris,
 non glebam prono convellit vomere taurus, 40
 non falx attenuat frondatorum arboris umbram,
 squalida desertis robigo infertur aratris.
 ipsius at sedes, quacumque opulenta recessit
 regia, fulgenti splendent auro atque argento.
 candet ebur soliis, collucent pocula mensae, 45
 tota domus gaudet regali splendida gaza.
 pulvinar vero divae geniale locatur
 sedibus in mediis, Indo quod dente politum
 tincta tegit roseo conchyli purpura fuco.
 haec vestis priscis hominum variata figuris 50
 heroum mira virtutes indicat arte.
 namque fluentisono prospectans litore Diae,
 Thesea cedentem celeri cum classe tuetur
 indomitos in corde gerens Ariadna furores,
 necdum etiam sese quae visit visere credit, 55
 utpote fallaci quae tum primum excita somno
 desertam in sola miseram se cernat harena.
 immemor at iuvenis fugiens pellit vada remis,
 irrita ventosae linquens promissa procellae.
 quem procul ex alga maestis Minois ocellis, 60
 saxea ut effigies bacchantis, prospicit, eheu,
 prospicit et magnis curarum fluctuat undis,
 non flavo retinens subtilem vertice mitram,
 non contexta levi velatum pectus amictu,

35 Cieros *Meineke*: siros *V*

37 Pharsalum *Pontanus*: farsaliam *V*

64 velatum *V*: fortasse variatum *Nisbet*

When once the longed-for days arrived after the passage of time,
 then the whole of Thessaly throngs the house in a gathering,
 and the palace is swarming with a joyous crowd.
 They bear gifts in front of them, they state their joy on their faces.
 Cieros is abandoned, they leave behind Phthiotic Tempe, 35
 the homes of Crannon and the city-walls of Larissa:
 they gather at Pharsalus, they throng the houses of Pharsalus.
 Nobody tends the countryside, the bullocks' necks grow soft,
 the low-growing vine is not cleared with curved rakes,
 the bull does not turn over the clod of earth with the downward-pointing
 ploughshare, 40

the pruners' hook does not thin out the shade of the tree,
 and a scale of rust spreads over the abandoned ploughs.
 The master's house, however, as far as the rich palace
 spread, is brilliant with gleaming gold and silver.
 Ivory is white on the thrones, the cups on the table shine, 45
 the whole house rejoices, blazing bright with princely treasure.
 The sacred wedding-couch of the goddess is positioned
 in the middle of the palace: it is polished with Indian tooth
 and covered with purple dyed with the crimson stain of the seashell.

This coverlet, tricked out with the antique figures of people, 50
 shows forth the heroisms of great men with wonderful skill.
 For there gazing forward on the wave-sounding shore of Dia,
 Ariadne watches Theseus departing with his swift fleet,
 bearing uncontrolled madness in her heart:
 nor does she yet believe that she sees what she is seeing, 55
 since she has only just been awakened from a deceitful sleep
 to see her poor self abandoned on the lonely sand.
 But the young man flees beating the waves with his oars oblivious,
 leaving behind his empty promises to the windy storm.
 The daughter of Minos gazes out at him from the seaweed afar off with sad
 little eyes, 60

just like a stone statue of a Bacchant she gazes, alas,
 gazes and tosses on huge waves of emotions,
 not keeping the delicate headband on her blonde head,
 not keeping her breast veiled and concealed with the light robe,

non tereti strophio lactentis vincta papillas, 65
 omnia quae toto delapsa e corpore passim
 ipsius ante pedes fluctus salis alludebant.
 sed neque tum mitrae neque tum fluitantis amictus
 illa vicem curans toto ex te pectore, Theseu,
 toto animo, tota pendebat perdita mente. 70
 a misera, assiduis quam luctibus externavit
 spinosas Erycina serens in pectore curas,
 illa ex tempestate, ferox quo ex tempore Theseus
 egressus curvis e litoribus Piraei
 attigit iniusti regis Gortynia templa. 75
 nam perhibent olim crudeli peste coactam
 Androgeoneae poenas exsolvere caedis
 electos iuvenes simul et decus innuptarum
 Cecropiam solitam esse dapem dare Minotauro.
 quis angusta malis cum moenia vexarentur, 80
 ipse suum Theseus pro caris corpus Athenis
 proicere optavit potius quam talia Cretam
 funera Cecropiae nec funera portarentur.
 atque ita nave levi nitens ac lenibus auris
 magnanimum ad Minoa venit sedesque superbas. 85
 hunc simul ac cupido conspexit lumine virgo
 regia, quam suavis expirans castus odores
 lectulus in molli complexu matris alebat,
 quales Eurotae progignunt flumina myrtus,
 aurave distinctos educit verna colores, 90
 non prius ex illo flagrantia declinavit
 lumina, quam cuncto concepit corpore flammam
 funditus atque imis exarsit tota medullis.
 heu misere exagitans immiti corde furores
 sancte puer, curis hominum qui gaudia misces, 95
 quaeque regis Golgos quaeque Idalium frondosum,
 qualibus incensam iactastis mente puellam
 fluctibus, in flavo saepe hospite suspirantem!

73 ex addidit Baehrens

75 templa nescio quis ante annum 1450: templa V: tecta Parthenius.

not binding her milky breasts with the flimsy brassière - 65
 all of which slipped right off her entire body in all directions
 and the waves of the brine played with them in front of her feet.
 But at that time she cared nothing for what happened to a headband
 nor for a fluttering robe, she cared with all her breast for you, Theseus,
 with all her spirit, with all her mind she clung on, lost in love. 70
 Oh love-sick girl – whom Erycina, sowing thorny cares in her heart,
 drove mad with constant grief
 from the time when savage Theseus,
 leaving the curving shores of Piraeus,
 reached the Cretan palaces of the unjust king. 75
 For they say that once, forced by a cruel plague
 to pay the penalty for the murder of Androgeon,
 the land of Cecrops had grown used to giving chosen young
 men and the flower of the unwed maidens to the Minotaur as his feast.
 When the narrow walls were being sorely tried by these evils, 80
 Theseus himself chose to risk his own body on behalf of his
 dear Athens, rather than have such undead deaths carried
 to Crete from the land of Cecrops.
 In this way, therefore, carried on a light ship and the gentle breezes
 he came to great-hearted Minos and his haughty palace. 85
 As soon as the unwed princess saw this man with her lustful eye –
 she whom, in the soft embrace of her mother,
 the pure little bed, breathing forth pleasant odours, used to nurse,
 odours such as those of the myrtles which the streams of Eurotas bring forth
 or of the flowers which the spring breeze brings out in all their colours – 90
 she did not turn her blazing eyes away from
 him until she had conceived a flame deep in her entire body
 and was totally on fire in the depths of the marrow of her bones.
 Alas, divine boy who stir up madness so sadly with your
 ruthless heart, who mix together human joys with human cares, 95
 and you lady who rule over Golgi and leafy Idalium –
 on what streams did you toss the girl, aflame in her mind,
 sighing frequently over the fair-haired foreigner!

quantos illa tulit languenti corde timores!
 quanto saepe magis fulgore expalluit auri! 100
 cum saevum cupiens contra contendere monstrum
 aut mortem appeteret Theseus aut praemia laudis.
 non ingrata tamen frustra munuscula divis
 promittens tacito succendit vota labello.
 nam velut in summo quatientem brachia Tauro 105
 quercum, aut conigeram sudanti cortice pinum,
 indomitus turbo contorquens flamine robur,
 eruit (illa procul radicitus exturbata
 prona cadit, late quaeviscumque obvia frangens),
 sic domito saevum prostravit corpore Theseus 110
 nequiquam vanis iactantem cornua ventis.
 inde pedem sospes multa cum laude reflexit
 errabunda regens tenui vestigia filo,
 ne labyrinthis e flexibus egredientem
 tecti frustraretur inobservabilis error. 115
 sed quid ego a primo digressus carmine plura
 commemorem, ut linquens genitoris filia vultum,
 ut consanguineae complexum, ut denique matris
 quae misera in nata deperdita lamentata est,
 omnibus his Thesei dulcem praeoptarit amorem: 120
 aut ut vecta rati spumosa ad litora Diae,
 venerit, aut ut eam devinctam lumina somno
 liquerit immemori discedens pectore coniunx?
 saepe illam perhibent ardenti corde furentem
 clarisonas imo fuisse e pectore voces, 125
 ac tum praeruptos tristem conscendere montes,
 unde aciem in pelagi vastos protenderet aestus,
 tum tremuli salis adversas procurrere in undas
 mollia nudatae tollentem tegmina surae,
 atque haec extremis maestam dixisse querellis, 130
 frigidulos udo singultus ore cientem.
 'sicine me patriis avectam, perfide, ab aris,
 perfide, deserto liquisti in litore, Theseu?

109 late quaeviscumque *Ellis*: lateque cum eius *V*: late quaecumque habet *Baehrens*

119 lamentata est *Conington*: laetabatur *Lachmann*: leta *V*.

What great fears did she bear in her slow-beating heart!
 How much paler than the gleam of gold did her complexion often turn, 100
 when Theseus longing to set out against the wild monster
 went looking for either death or the rewards of praise!
 Not, however, unwelcome or futile were the small gifts
 which she promised the gods as she undertook her vow with silent lips.
 For just as an oak tree shaking its arms on the top of Mount Taurus 105
 or a cone-bearing pine tree with its resinous bark are ripped out
 by a relentless hurricane which unscrews the tree-trunk with its
 blast – the tree then falls flat afar off, torn out
 by the roots, shattering whatever lies in its path –
 in this way Theseus laid flat the wild monster with its body overcome, 110
 tossing its horns in vain at the empty winds.
 From there he unwound his steps safely with abundant praise,
 controlling his fallible footsteps with a thin thread
 to prevent his exit from the labyrinthine contortions
 being thwarted by the palace's undiscoverable maze. 115
 But I have digressed from where I began my song. Why should I make
 mention of any more – how the daughter leaving behind the face of her
 father,
 the embrace of her sister, even that of her mother,
 who grieved in despair over her love-sick daughter,
 all of which she placed second to the sweet love of Theseus: 120
 or then how she came, carried on a ship to the foamy shores of Naxos,
 and how her husband in his forgetfulness of heart departed leaving
 her as she lay with her eyes bound in sleep?
 Often, they say, she was raging with a blazing heart
 and poured out piercing voices from the bottom of her heart; 125
 now in her grief she climbed the sheer mountains
 so as to be able to stretch forth her gaze over the endless swellings of the
 ocean,
 then would run out into the oncoming waves of the trembling salt-water,
 lifting the soft coverings of her bared calf
 and, sad, said these things in her final laments, 130
 stirring up icy little sobs on her soaking face:
 'Is this the way you carried me off, traitor, from my father's altars,
 traitor, only to abandon me on this deserted shore, Theseus?

sicine discedens neglecto numine divum,
 immemor - a! - devota domum periuria portas? 135
 nullane res potuit crudelis flectere mentis
 consilium? tibi nulla fuit clementia praesto,
 immite ut nostri vellet miserescere pectus?
 at non haec quondam blanda promissa dedisti
 voce: mihi non haec miserae sperare iubebas, 140
 sed conubia laeta, sed optatos hymenaeos,
 quae cuncta aerii discernunt irrita venti.
 tum iam nulla viro iuranti femina credat,
 nulla viri speret sermones esse fideles;
 quis dum aliquid cupiens animus praegestit apisci, 145
 nil metuunt iurare, nihil promittere parcunt:
 sed simul ac cupidae mentis satiata libido est,
 dicta nihil metuere, nihil periuria curant.
 certe ego te in medio versantem turbine leti
 eripui, et potius germanum amittere crevi, 150
 quam tibi fallaci supremo in tempore dessem.
 pro quo dilaceranda feris dabor alitibusque
 praeda, neque iniacta tumulabor mortua terra.
 quaenam te genuit sola sub rupe leaena,
 quod mare conceptum spumantibus exspuit undis, 155
 quae Syrtis, quae Scylla rapax, quae vasta Charybdis,
 talia qui reddis pro dulci praemia vita?
 si tibi non cordi fuerant conubia nostra,
 saeva quod horrebas prisci praecepta parentis,
 at tamen in vestras potuisti ducere sedes, 160
 quae tibi iucundo famularer serva labore,
 candida permulcens liquidis vestigia lymphis,
 purpureaeve tuum consternens veste cubile.
 sed quid ego ignaris nequiquam conquerar auris,
 externata malo, quae nullis sensibus auctae 165
 nec missas audire queunt nec reddere voces?
 ille autem prope iam mediis versatur in undis,
 nec quisquam apparet vacua mortalis in alga.
 sic nimis insultans extremo tempore saeva

Is this the way you ignore the power of the gods
 and depart, mindless – ah! – as you carry home your cursed broken oaths?
 Was nothing capable of turning your mind's unfeeling
 purpose? Did you have no mercy in you,
 to make your cruel heart prepared to pity me?

These were not the promises which you once gave me with your flattering
 voice, these were not the hopes you bade this love-sick woman to have,
 but rather joyful marriage, the wedding-songs I longed for –
 all of which the winds of the air scatter for nothing.

From now on let no woman believe a man's oath,
 let no woman expect a man's words to be reliable:
 with men, as long as their lustful heart is ardent to obtain something,
 then there is nothing that they are afraid to swear, no promise that they hold
 back from making.

Once the urge of their lustful mind has been slaked, however,
 then they show no fear of their words, no concern for their broken oaths.
 You cannot deny that you were tossing in the middle of the whirlpool of
 death

when I saved you, and I decided to lose my brother
 rather than to fail you in your hour of crisis, you cheat.

As thanks for all this I shall be given over to the wild beasts to be torn apart,
 as carrion to the birds, nor will I have a mound heaped over me with earth
 thrown upon me when I am dead.

What lioness gave birth to you under a lonely rock?
 What sea conceived you and vomited you out of its foaming waters?
 What Syrtes, what voracious Scylla, what devouring Charybdis –
 seeing that you give back returns such as this for your sweet life?

Even if your heart had gone against marriage with me,
 because you shrank back from the unflinching commands of an aged father,
 all the same you could have taken me to your home
 to be a household slave in a labour of love,
 soothing your white feet with liquid waters
 and strewing your bed with a garment of crimson.

But why am I complaining in vain to the ignorant breezes,
 out of my mind with sorrow speaking to winds which are endowed with no
 senses

and cannot hear the voices uttered to them nor return them?
 By now he is almost in the middle of the waves in his course,
 nor does any human being appear on the empty seaweed.
 This is how spiteful fate – all too exultant in my last hour –

fors etiam nostris invidit questibus auris. 170
 Iuppiter omnipotens, utinam ne tempore primo
 Gnoscia Cecropiae tetigissent litora puppes,
 indomito nec dira ferens stipendia tauro,
 perfidus in Creta religasset navita funem,
 nec malus hic celans dulci crudelia forma 175
 consilia in nostris requiesset sedibus hospes!
 nam quo me referam? quali spe perdita nitor?
 Idaeosne petam montes? at gurgite lato
 discernens ponti truculentum dividit aequor.
 an patris auxilium sperem? quemne ipsa reliqui 180
 respersum iuvenem fraterna caede secuta?
 coniugis an fido consoler memet amore?
 quine fugit lentos incurvans gurgite remos?
 praeterea nullo colitur sola insula tecto,
 nec patet egressus pelagi cingentibus undis: 185
 nulla fugae ratio, nulla spes: omnia muta,
 omnia sunt deserta, ostentant omnia letum.
 non tamen ante mihi languescent lumina morte,
 nec prius a fesso secedent corpore sensus,
 quam iustam a divis exposcam prodita multam, 190
 caelestumque fidem postrema comprecser hora.
 quare facta virum multantes vindice poena,
 Eumenides, quibus anguino redimita capillo
 frons expirantis praeporat pectoris iras,
 huc huc adventate, meas audite querellas, 195
 quas ego, vae misera, extremis proferre medullis
 cogor inops, ardens, amenti caeca furore.
 quae quoniam verae nascuntur pectore ab imo,
 vos nolite pati nostrum vanescere luctum,
 sed quali solam Theseus me mente relinquit, 200
 tali mente, deae, funestet seque suosque.'
 has postquam maestis profudit pectore voces,
 supplicium saevis exposcens anxia factis,
 annuit invicto caelestum numine rector.

178 at *Muretus*: a! *Guarinus*: a V

184 colitur *Palmer*: litus V

has begrudged me even ears to hear my complaints. 170
 Almighty Jupiter, would that the Athenian ships had never
 touched the Cretan shores in the first place
 and that, bearing the dreadful wages to the untamed bull,
 the treacherous sailor had never tied up his cable onto Crete:
 would that this wicked man, hiding his heartless plans in a sweet 175
 appearance, had never rested as a guest in our home!
 For where shall I go to? What hope may I depend on in my helplessness?
 Shall I seek the mountains of Ida? But the rough plain
 of the sea divides and separates us with its wide gulf.
 Or shall I hope for the help of my father – whom I left behind 180
 when I followed after a young man who was spattered with my brother's
 blood?
 Or should I console myself with the faithful love of my husband –
 who is running away from me, bending his pliant oars over the sea?
 What is more, the island is lonely, tended by no dwelling,
 and no means of escape lies open to me with the waves of the ocean
 surrounding it all round. Of flight there is no method, no hope: all is 185
 silent,
 all is abandoned, all things show doom.
 Yet my eyes will not droop in death,
 nor will my senses withdraw from my exhausted body,
 before I demand a fair punishment from the gods in my betrayal 190
 and pray for the faith of the heavenly ones in my final hour.
 Wherefore, you who punish the deeds of men with vengeful penalty,
 Kindly Ones, whose forehead, bound with snakes for hair,
 carries forward the snorting anger of your breast –
 come here, come here, hear my laments 195
 which I – wretch that I am – am compelled to express from the furthest
 marrow of my bones helpless, blazing, blind with mindless madness.
 Since these laments are sincerely born from the bottom of my heart,
 do not suffer my grief to evaporate,
 but see to it that Theseus shall bring destruction to himself and his people 200
 with the same state of mind, goddesses, with which he abandoned me all
 alone.'

After she poured these utterances from her sad breast,
 anxiously demanding retribution for the savage deeds,
 the ruler of the gods nodded assent with his invincible nod.

quo motu tellus atque horrida contremuerunt 205
 aequora concussitque micantia sidera mundus.
 ipse autem caeca mentem caligine Theseus
 consitus oblito dimisit pectore cuncta,
 quae mandata prius constanti mente tenebat,
 dulcia nec maesto sustollens signa parenti 210
 sospitem Erechtheum se ostendit visere portum.
 namque ferunt olim, classi cum moenia divae
 linquentem natum ventis concrederet Aegeus,
 talia complexum iuveni mandata dedisse.
 'nate mihi longa iucundior unice vita, 215
 nate, ego quem in dubios cogor dimittere casus,
 reddite in extrema nuper mihi fine senectae,
 quandoquidem fortuna mea ac tua fervida virtus
 eripit invito mihi te, cui languida nondum
 lumina sunt nati cara saturata figura, 220
 non ego te gaudens laetanti pectore mittam,
 nec te ferre sinam fortunae signa secundae,
 sed primum multas expromam mente querellas,
 canitiem terra atque infuso pulvere foedans,
 inde infecta vago suspendam lintea malo, 225
 nostros ut luctus nostraeque incendia mentis
 carbasus obscurata dicet ferrugine Hibera.
 quod tibi si sancti concesserit incola Itoni,
 quae nostrum genus, has sedes defendere Erechthi
 annuit, ut tauri respergas sanguine dextram, 230
 tum vero facito ut memori tibi condita corde
 haec vigeant mandata, nec ulla oblitteret aetas;
 ut simul ac nostros invisent lumina collis,
 funestam antennae deponant undique vestem,
 candidaque intorti sustollant vela rudentes, 235
 quam primum cernens ut laeta gaudia mente
 agnoscam, cum te reducem aetas prospera sistet.'
 haec mandata prius constanti mente tenentem
 Thesea ceu pulsae ventorum flamine nubes
 aereum nivei montis liquere cacumen. 240

At this movement the earth and the bristling plains 205
 of the sea trembled and the firmament rattled its gleaming stars.
 Theseus himself, however, with his mind planted with unseeing darkness,
 put everything out of his forgetful heart –
 all the instructions which he was previously holding on to in constancy of
 purpose;
 he did not raise up the welcome sails to his sad parent 210
 and thus show that he was seeing the port of Athens safe and sound.
 For they say that once, when he was leaving the city walls of the goddess
 in his fleet and Aegeus was entrusting his son to the winds,
 he had embraced him and given him the following instructions:
 'My only son, sweeter to me by far than life itself, 215
 son, whom I am compelled to send away into uncertain chance,
 when you have just recently been given to me on the furthest edge of old
 age,
 seeing that my fortune and your boiling courage
 snatches you away from me against my will – when my drooping eyes
 are not yet satisfied with the beloved shape of my son. 220
 I shall not send you away rejoicing with a glad heart,
 nor shall I allow you to bear the ensigns of good fortune,
 but first of all I will express many laments from my soul,
 defiling my white hair with earth and dust poured on it,
 and then I will hang dyed sails on your wandering mast, 225
 so that the darkened canvas may proclaim my grief
 and the fire of my mind with its Iberian purple.
 But if the one who dwells in divine Itonus, the one
 who consents to defend our race and the abodes of Erechtheus,
 if she grants that you may spatter your right hand with the blood of the
 bull, 230
 then see to it that these instructions be buried in your unforgetting mind
 and be kept fresh, and that no passage of time should blot them out.
 As soon as your eyes see our hills,
 so that your yard-arms everywhere may lower the cloth of death
 and let the twisted sheets hoist white sails, 235
 so that I may see my joys with a glad heart as soon as possible and
 recognise the moment when favourable time will restore you after your
 journey.'
 Theseus had held on to these instructions up to that time with fixed purpose.
 Now they left him, as clouds beaten by the blast of the winds
 leave the airy peak of a snowy mountain. 240

at pater, ut summa prospectum ex arce petebat,
 anxia in assiduos absumens lumina fletus,
 cum primum inflati conspexit lintea veli,
 praecipitem sese scopulorum e vertice iecit,
 amissum credens immiti Thesea fato. 245
 sic funesta domus ingressus tecta paterna
 morte ferox Theseus, qualem Minoidi luctum
 obtulerat mente immemori talem ipse recepit.
 quae tamen aspectans cedentem maesta carinam
 multiplices animo volvebat saucia curas. 250
 at parte ex alia florens volitabat Iacchus
 cum thiaso Satyrorum et Nysigenis Silenis,
 te quaerens, Ariadna, tuoque incensus amore.
 quae tum alacres passim lymphata mente furebant
 euhoe bacchantes euhoe capita inflectentes. 255
 harum pars tecta quatiebant cuspide thyrsos,
 pars e divulso iactabant membra iuvenco,
 pars sese tortis serpentibus incingebant,
 pars obscura cavis celebrabant orgia cistis,
 orgia, quae frustra cupiunt audire profani, 260
 plangebant aliae proceris tympana palmis,
 aut tereti tenuis tinnitus aere ciebant,
 multis raucisonos efflabant cornua bombos
 barbaraque horribili stridebat tibia cantu.
 talibus amplifice vestis decorata figuris 265
 pulvinar complexa suo velabat amictu.
 quae postquam cupide spectando Thessala pubes
 expleta est, sanctis coepit decedere divis.
 hic, qualis flatu placidum mare matutino
 horrificans Zephyrus proclivas incitat undas, 270
 aurora exoriente vagi sub limina Solis:
 quae tarde primum clementi flamine pulsae
 procedunt, leni et resonant plangore cachinni,
 post vento crescente magis magis increbrescunt,
 purpureaque procul nantes ab luce refulgent: 275

243 inflati V: fortasse infecti *Sabellicus*

254 quae *Bergk*: qui tum alacres V: cui Thyades *O. Skutsch*:

But the father, when he looked for a sighting from the top of his citadel,
wasting away his fearful eyes in constant weeping,
when first he caught sight of the canvas of the billowing sail,
he threw himself headlong from the peak of the rocks,
believing that Theseus had been taken away by cruel fortune. 245
In this way, entering the dwelling of his home which was mourning for his
father's

death, fierce Theseus received the sort of grief which
in his forgetfulness of mind he had inflicted on the daughter of Minos.
She meanwhile, gazing sadly out at the departing ship,
was turning layer upon layer of feelings over in her mind, stricken. 250
And yet, from elsewhere, flowery Iacchus was flying
with his group of Satyrs and Sileni born on Mount Nysa,
looking for you, Ariadne, and on fire with passion for you.
They were then raging keenly everywhere with distracted mind,
shouting 'Evoe' in tumult, 'Evoe' as they bent their heads back. 255
Some of them were shaking their bacchic wands with covered tip,
some were tossing around the limbs from a heifer torn apart,
some were encircling themselves with twisted snakes,
some were thronging in worship of the ritual objects concealed in their
deep baskets

– rites which the uninitiated long in vain to hear; 260
other women beat drums with uplifted palms,
or produced gentle tinklings on their cymbals of rounded bronze.
In many cases horns blasted out rough-sounding boomings
and the foreign pipe wailed with its distressing song.

The coverlet was generously decorated with shapes such as this, 265
and in its embrace covered the bed with its cloth.
When once the young of Thessaly had been satisfied with eager
gazing on this, they began to make way for the awesome gods.
At this, just as the Zephyr ruffles the placid sea with his morning breath
and arouses waves which tumble forwards 270
as the dawn rises up to the threshold of the wandering sun;
the waves move slowly at first, beaten by the gentle wind,
and sound lightly with a splash as laughter:
later on as the wind increases they grow more and more frequent
and swimming far from the crimson glow they reflect it back. 275

sic tum vestibulo linquentes regia tecta
 ad se quisque vago passim pede discedebant.
 quorum post abitum princeps e vertice Peli
 advenit Chiron portans silvestria dona:
 nam quoscumque ferunt campi, quos Thessala magnis 280
 montibus ora creat, quos propter fluminis undas
 aura aperit flores tepidi fecunda Favoni,
 hos indistinctis plexos tulit ipse corollis,
 quo permulsa domus iucundo risit odore.
 confestim Peneus adest, viridantia Tempe, 285
 Tempe, quae silvae cingunt super impendentes,
 Haemonisin linquens crebris celebranda choreis,
 non vacuus: namque ille tulit radicitus altas
 fagos ac recto proceras stipite laurus,
 non sine nutanti platano lentaque sorore 290
 flammati Phaethontis et aerea cupressu.
 haec circum sedes late contexta locavit,
 vestibulum ut molli velatum fronde vireret.
 post hunc consequitur sollerti corde Prometheus,
 extenuata gerens veteris vestigia poenae, 295
 quam quondam silici restrictus membra catena
 persolvit pendens e verticibus praeruptis.
 inde pater divum sancta cum coniuge natisque
 advenit caelo, te solum, Phoebe, relinquens,
 unigenamque simul cultricem montibus Idri: 300
 Pelea nam tecum pariter soror aspernata est,
 nec Thetidis taedas voluit celebrare iugalis.
 qui postquam niveis flexerunt sedibus artus,
 large multiplici constructae sunt dape mensae,
 cum interea infirmo quatientes corpora motu 305
 veridicos Parcae coeperunt edere cantus.
 his corpus tremulum complectens undique vestis
 candida purpurea talos incinxerat ora,

276 vestibulo *Schrader*: vestibuli V

282 aperit *Housman*: perit V: parit g.

287 Haemonisin *Heinsius*: minosim V. crebris *Lachmann*: doris V

That is how the people, leaving the royal household by the forecourt,
 all departed home in all directions with wandering steps.
 After their departure the first to arrive, from the peak of Pelion,
 was Chiron bearing gifts from the woodland;
 for whatever flowers which the fields bear, all that the land of Thessaly 280
 produces on its great mountains, all those which the fertile breeze
 of the warm Favonius opens up by the waves of the river –
 all these he brought woven together in mingled garlands,
 and the house laughed, caressed by the pleasant odour.
 Immediately after him was Peneus, leaving green Tempe, 285
 Tempe which the overhanging woods encircle,
 for the daughters of Thessaly to celebrate with frequent dances.
 He was not empty-handed – for he brought high trees – roots and all -
 beeches and tall laurels straight of stem,
 complete with the nodding plane tree, and the pliant sister 290
 of Phaethon who was devoured in flames, and the lofty cypress.
 He placed these, woven together, far and wide around the house,
 so that the forecourt might be covered and green with soft foliage.
 After him there follows intelligent Prometheus,
 bearing faint traces of the old punishment 295
 which he had undergone once, his limbs tied by a chain
 to a rock and hanging from craggy cliffs.
 Then the father of the gods with his divine wife and sons came,
 leaving in heaven only you, Phoebus,
 and the dweller of the mountains of Idrus, your twin sister; 300
 for you and your sister both equally rejected Peleus
 and refused to celebrate the bridal torches of Thetis.
 After they had bent their limbs on the snow-white chairs,
 tables were generously erected with a many-layered feast,
 when in the meantime the Fates, shaking their bodies with uncertain 305
 movement, began to utter truth-telling song.
 These women had their trembling bodies completely hugged by
 a white garment which surrounded their ankles with a crimson border,

at roseo niveae residebant vertice vittae,
aeternumque manus carpebant rite laborem. 310
laeva colum molli lana retinebat amictum,
dextera tum leviter deducens fila supinis
formabat digitis, tum prono in pollice torquens
libratum tereti versabat turbine fusum,
atque ita decerpens aequabat semper opus dens, 315
laneaque aridulis haerebant morsa labellis,
quae prius in levi fuerant exstantia filo:
ante pedes autem candentis mollia lanae
velleri virgati custodibant calathisci.
haec tum clarisona vellentes velleri voce 320
taliter divino fuderunt carmine fata,
carmine, perfidiae quod post nulla arguet aetas.

o decus eximium magnis virtutibus augens,
Emathiae tutamen, Opis carissime nato,
accipe, quod laeta tibi pandunt luce sorores, 325
veridicum oraculum: sed vos, quae fata sequuntur,
currere ducentes subtegmina, currere, fusi.

adveniet tibi iam portans optata maritis
Hesperus, adveniet fausto cum sidere coniunx,
quae tibi flexanimo mentem perfundat amore, 330
languidulosque paret tecum coniungere somnos,
levia substernens robusto brachia collo.
currere ducentes subtegmina, currere, fusi.

nulla domus tales umquam contexit amores,
nullus amor tali coniunxit foedere amantes, 335
qualis adest Thetidi, qualis concordia Peleo.
currere ducentes subtegmina, currere, fusi.
nascetur vobis expers terroris Achilles,
hostibus haud tergo, sed forti pectore notus,
qui persaepe vago victor certamine cursus 340
flammea praevertet celeris vestigia cervae.

and chaplets of rose sat on their snow-white head,
 as their hands ritually plucked away at their everlasting task. 310
 The left hand held a distaff covered in soft wool,
 the right hand drawing down the threads gently, with fingers facing
 upwards shaped them and then twisting it on downward-facing thumb
 spun the spindle poised on its circular wheel,
 and then their tooth constantly kept plucking their work clean and even, 315
 and sticking to their dry little lips were bitten fragments of wool
 which had previously been rough on the smooth thread;
 before their feet wicker baskets looked
 after the soft fleeces of white wool.
 Carding these fleeces then they poured out with a clear-sounding voice 320
 these fates in godly song,
 song which no later generation will ever convict of mendacity.
 'You who enrich your outstanding glory with your great acts of courage,
 fortress of Thessaly, most beloved to the son of Ops,
 receive the truth-telling oracle which the sisters reveal to you 325
 on this happy day; but you, drawing the woof-threads which
 the fates follow, run spindles, run.

The Evening Star will come to you soon, bringing what husbands long for,
 your wife will come to you with a star of good omen,
 your wife who is to soak your heart with soul-twisting love 330
 and to prepare to join her languid little sleeps with you,
 putting her smooth arms under your strong neck.
 Drawing the woof-threads, run spindles, run.

No home has ever covered love such as this, 335
 no love has joined together lovers in such a bond,
 as there is with Thetis or as is the harmony with Peleus.
 Drawing the woof-threads, run spindles, run.

Achilles will be born to you, a man knowing no fear,
 a man known to the enemy not by his back but by his strong front,
 who very often as victor in the wide-ranging running race 340
 will outstrip the steps of the swift stag, fast as fire.

currите ducentes subtegmina, currите, fusi.
 non illi quisquam bello se conferet heros,
 cum Phrygii Teucro manabunt sanguine campi,
 Troicaque obsidens longinquo moenia bello, 345
 periuri Pelopis vastabit tertius heres.
 currите ducentes subtegmina, currите, fusi.

illius egregias virtutes claraque facta
 saepe fatebuntur natorum in funere matres,
 cum incultum cano solvent a vertice crinem, 350
 putridaque infirmis variabunt pectora palmis.
 currите ducentes subtegmina, currите, fusi.

namque velut densas praecerpens cultor aristas
 sole sub ardenti flaventia demetit arva,
 Troiugenum infesto prosternet corpora ferro. 355
 currите ducentes subtegmina, currите, fusi.

testis erit magnis virtutibus unda Scamandri,
 quae passim rapido diffunditur Hellesponto,
 cuius iter caesis angustans corporum acervis
 alta tepefaciet permixta flumina caede. 360
 currите ducentes subtegmina, currите, fusi.

denique testis erit morti quoque reddita praeda,
 cum teres excelso coacervatum aggere bustum
 excipiet niveos percussae virginis artus.
 currите ducentes subtegmina, currите, fusi. 365
 nam simul ac fessis dederit fors copiam Achivis
 urbis Dardaniae Neptunia solve vincla,
 alta Polyxenia madefient caede sepulcra:
 quae, velut ancipiti succumbens victima ferro,
 proiciet truncum summisso poplite corpus. 370
 currите ducentes subtegmina, currите, fusi.

Drawing the woof-threads, run spindles, run.
 No hero will compare himself in war with this man,
 when the Phrygian plains will drip with Trojan blood,
 and he, besieging the Trojan fortress in a drawn-out war, 345
 the third heir of perjured Pelops, will despoil it.
 Drawing the woof-threads, run spindles, run.

That man's outstanding heroism and famous deeds
 will often be spoken of by mothers at their sons' funeral,
 when they will loosen their unkempt hair from their hoary head 350
 and will bruise their decaying breasts with feeble hands.
 Drawing the woof-threads, run spindles, run.

For just as the harvester cutting down the thick ears of corn
 under the blazing sun mows down the gleaming yellow fields,
 so will he strew the bodies of the sons of Troy with his offensive steel. 355
 Drawing the woof-spindles, run spindles, run.

The wave of Scamander will testify to his immense heroism,
 Scamander which flows broadly into the engulfing Hellespont,
 whose stream he will choke with heaps of bodies, slaughtered,
 warming the deep river with mingled blood. 360
 Drawing the woof-threads, run spindles, run.

Final witness will be the sacrifice given to to him even when he is dead,
 when a rounded barrow heaped up with a lofty mound
 will receive the snowy limbs of a virgin struck dead.
 Drawing the woof-threads, run spindles, run. 365
 For as soon as fate will have given the tired Greeks the power
 to untie the Neptunian bonds of the Dardan city,
 then will the lofty tomb be soaked with Polyxena's blood;
 Polyxena, who, falling like a beast-victim to the two-edged steel,
 will buckle at the knees and throw her headless body forward. 370
 Drawing the woof-threads, run spindles, run.

quare agite optatos animi coniungite amores.
accipiat coniunx felici foedere divam,
dedatur cupido iam dudum nupta marito.

currite ducentes subtegmina, currite, fusi.

375

non illam nutrix orienti luce revisens
hesterno collum poterit circumdare filo,
[currite ducentes subtegmina, currite, fusi]
anxia nec mater discordis maesta puellae
secubitu caros mittet sperare nepotes.

380

currite ducentes subtegmina, currite, fusi.

taliam praefantes quondam felicia Pelei
carmina divino cecinerunt pectore Parcae.
praesentes namque ante domos invisere castas
heroum, et sese mortali ostendere coetu,

385

caelicolae nondum spreta pietate solebant.
saepe pater divum templo in fulgente revisens,
annua cum festis venissent sacra diebus,
conspexit terra centum procumbere tauros.

saepe vagus Liber Parnasi vertice summo

390

Thyadas effusis euantis crinibus egit,
cum Delphi tota certatim ex urbe ruentes
acciperent laeti divum fumantibus aris.

saepe in letifero belli certamine Mavors

aut rapidi Tritonis hera aut Amarynthia virgo
armatas hominum est praesens hortata catervas.

395

sed postquam tellus scelere est imbuta nefando,
iustitiamque omnes cupida de mente fugarunt,
perfudere manus fraterno sanguine fratres,

destitit extinctos natus lugere parentes,

400

optavit genitor primaevi funera nati,

liber uti nuptae poteretur flore novellae,

ignaro mater substernens se impia nato

378 *seclusit Bergk*

402 uti nuptae *Maehly*: ut innuptae *V.* novellae *Baehrens*: novercae *V*

And so come now, join together the longed for love of your heart.
 Let the husband receive his goddess in a bond of bliss,
 let the bride be handed over now at last to her eager bridegroom.
 Drawing the woof-threads, run spindles, run.

375

When the nurse sees her again at the rising of the light she will not
 be able to wind her neck all around with the thread of yesterday,
 [Drawing the woof-threads, run, spindles, run]
 nor will the fearful mother, sad at the sleeping apart of her
 estranged girl, give up hoping for beloved grandsons.
 Drawing the woof-threads, run spindles, run.

380

Such were once the prophetic songs, portending happy things
 for Peleus, which the Fates sang from their divine breast.
 For in earlier times the heaven-dwellers used to visit
 the pure homes of heroes in person, and show themselves

385

to human gathering since religion had not yet been spurned.
 Often the father of the gods visited his gleaming temple
 when the annual rites had come around on festival days
 and saw a hundred bulls crash to the ground.

Often the roaming Bacchus drove his whooping Thyiads
 on the topmost summit of Parnassus with their hair flowing,
 when the people of Delphi rushed in competition with each other out of the
 whole town

390

to receive the god on their smoking altars in gladness.

Often in the death-delivering clash of war Mars
 or the mistress of the racing Triton or the Amarynthian maid
 urged on their armed battalions of men in person.

395

But after the earth was soaked with evil crime
 and everybody scattered justice from their lustful minds,
 brothers wet their hands with brothers' blood,

the son stopped grieving for his deceased parents,
 the father longed for the death of his first-born son

400

so that he might be able freely to enjoy the flower of a new young wife:
 the wicked mother laying herself underneath her unwitting son,

impia non verita est divos scelerare penates,
omnia fanda nefanda malo permixta furore
iustificam nobis mentem avertere deorum.
quare nec talis dignantur visere coetus,
nec se contingi patiuntur lumine claro.

405

404 penates *nescio quis ante annum 1450*: parentes V

wickedly showed no fear of adulterating her family gods.

Everything both speakable and unspeakable, mingled together in wicked
madness,

405

has turned the righteous mind of the gods away from us.

That is why they do not deem our gatherings worthy of visiting,

nor do they allow themselves to be touched with the clear light of day.